

# Kogarah Historical Society Inc

Carss Cottage Museum, Carss Park

Postal Address PO Box 367, Kogarah 1485

[www.kogarah.historicalsociety.com.au](http://www.kogarah.historicalsociety.com.au)

Patron: Kevin Greene, Mayor

President: Beverley Earnshaw

## *Newsletter*

*September/October 2018*

*Volume 10, No 4*



*The Society had a busy week at the Museum recently. Three tours, which included 79 children from Blakehurst Primary School, one group pictured here with Beverley Earnshaw speaking. 8 volunteers that day to cope!*

### **Meetings and Speakers**

**Thursday 13 September 2018**

Edith Ziegler, Author – *Leslie Walford & Dora Byrne, Public Lives, Private letters*

**Thursday 11 October 2018**

Pauline Curby, Author – *The History of St George Girl's School*

The September meeting starts at 2 pm in the **Community Hub, 49 English St. Kogarah.** October is again at the School of Arts, at 2 pm. Enjoy the speaker, then chat over afternoon tea which is followed by a short business meeting. Apologies for non-attendance should go to the Secretary, Gill Whan (9546 4623).

Find us on Facebook



# **Mondays at the Museum**

24 September 2018

## **Doug Minty, Clock Association and more**

Doug and his fellow members of Clock conservators are responsible for the re-birth of the large railway clock in the foyer of the Cottage. But on this occasion Doug is going to talk about *Medical Inventions*. We will stay outside if the weather permits. Cost is \$5 which covers our delicious morning tea and gives you a chance to win a lucky door prize. We ask that you book if possible, it assists with catering and if we have to resort to inside the Cottage, the space is limited. To reserve your place please ring Adele Ryan on 9529 6730 or leave a message on her answering machine.

## **Sunday Museum Roster**

**Opening hours 1pm–4pm. (winter hours)**

### **September 2018**

2<sup>nd</sup> Carole Tier & Ken Grieve  
9<sup>th</sup> Mavis Ward & Robert McGarn  
16<sup>th</sup> Betty Goodger & Fiona Johnstone  
23<sup>rd</sup> Pat Young & Heather Campbell  
30<sup>th</sup> Cath and Leo Sullivan

### **October 2018**

7<sup>th</sup> Wendy Agzarian & Elaine Filewood  
14<sup>th</sup> Adele Ryan & Joe Spinelli  
21<sup>st</sup> Betty Goodger & Pat Young  
28<sup>th</sup> Miriam & Niver Rodriguez

**Problems:** If you need to exchange days with someone, please try to do so amongst yourselves, otherwise contact Wendy Agzarian (9774 3667) Emergency roster – Anne Williams (0425 215 589), Cath & Leo Sullivan (9579 6149)

## **Committee 2018 (\*denotes Executive)**

<b>President:*</b>	Beverley Earnshaw	Ph: 9546 1091
<b>Vice President:*</b>	Pat Young	Ph. 9593 1898
<b>Secretary :*</b>	Gill Whan	Ph: 9546 4623
<b>Treasurer:*</b>	Cath Sullivan	Ph: 9579 6149
<b>Public Officer*</b>	Robert McGarn	Ph: 0425 706 579

**Committee Members:** Wendy Agzarian, Barbara Davids, Glynn Pulling, Rodger Robertson, Adele Ryan, Mavis Ward.

### **Committee Meeting Venues:**

10 Sept 2 pm Gill Whan, 11 Dewrang St, Carss Park (9546 4623)  
8 Oct 2 pm Beverley Earnshaw, 15 Hamer Street, Kogarah Bay (9546 1091)  
5 Nov 2 pm Pat Young, 25 Culver Street, Monterey (9593 1898)

## **New Member**

**Welcome to Ralph Heness**

***We hope you enjoy your time with the Society***

## Fists at Frog's Hollow Prize-fighting in the George's River area, 1843-1853

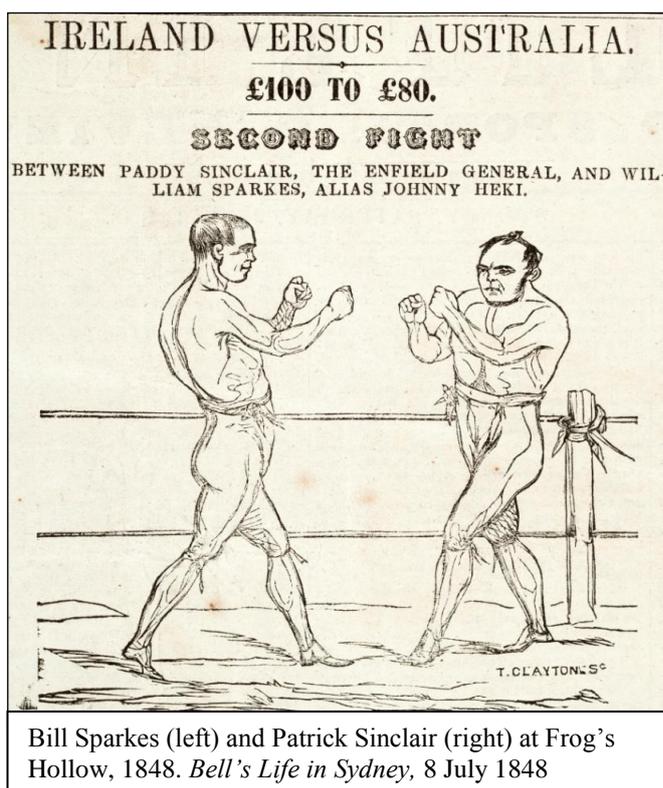
By Sue Castrique

*Sue Castrique was a winner of the Kogarah Historical Society Local History Awards 2018. Pictured: Kevin Greene, Mayor presenting Certificate to Sue. Part 2 of her essay follows.*



Crucial to the sport was *Bell's Life in Sydney*. The newspaper covered the turf, cricket and pedestrianism, but its publisher, Charlie Nichols was a particular enthusiast of pugilism. His paper kept yearly records of all fights, and Nichols himself attended many of them, providing blow-by-blow descriptions, and thrilling narratives of his trips into the bush. His columns reveal a who's-who of pugilism and its workings, and they were written with energy, verve and a subversive tongue-in-cheek that was not matched by the London version of the sporting paper. *Bell's Life in Sydney* called itself 'the paper of the people', and boasted that it had the most extensive circulation in the country, especially with 'the lower classes with whom it has considerable influence'. It was also a favourite paper for the NSW Governor, Sir Charles Fitzroy.<sup>10</sup>

Yet unknown to Nichols, the paper was also being closely monitored by the Colonial Secretary's Office. His paper provided all the details necessary for police to identify the fighters and location of the next match. Plans had been made for Paddy Sinclair to fight Frank Norris as a warm-up to the Perry and Hough match at George's River in 1849. But two days before, both George Hough and Patrick Sinclair were arrested. Charged with intending to commit a breach of the peace the magistrate lectured them on the 'gross immorality' of fighting. Released on bail and bound over to keep the peace, Sinclair then declined his fight, although it did not deter Hough.<sup>11</sup>



The community of George's River, the sawyers, splitters and charcoal-burners who worked in the forests were an eager audience. Brothers Tom, William and Isaac Sparkes were sawyers who all became prize fighters; ready to swing an axe or their fists. Born in Petersham, the brothers trained in the Cook's River area, but it was Bill Sparkes who excelled. He fought in championship matches in the colony where he was celebrated as 'the Australian' against Irish or English favourites. In 1847 he fought in England, one of the first colonial sportsmen to fight overseas. He returned a celebrity, 'the prince of Australian boxers'. The brothers were central figures in the prize ring:

Tom and Bill acted as seconds to Hough at George's River; they staged benefits; managed and trained younger fighters, and continued to fight themselves.<sup>12</sup>

Pugilists and their supporters were not only ex-convicts and labourers. Gentleman and officers were keen followers of the sport and underpinned pugilism in the colony. The 'nobby order' were easy to spot at a match, arriving bejewelled, in high boots; a red-coated officer galloping up on a thirteen hand pony to take his place beside urchins hanging from giant trees. Even the *Sydney Morning Herald*, though it campaigned vigorously against the sport, conceded that pugilism's spectators were also:

men of property—men of education—men of good fame and repute—and some even bearing Her Majesty's commission as conservators of the peace.<sup>13</sup>

Pugilism was a favoured sport of gentlemen and officers and part of an impeccable national British tradition. It was taught at Harrow, Winchester and Eton as a form of moral education, and in military colleges it was a component of drill. It was an exercise that kept a soldier agile in the field, and his mind under control. There were subtle tensions for gentlemen in mingling with 'thieves, pickpockets and ruffians' at a prize fight, and sportsmen were advised that they 'cannot always choose their company'.<sup>14</sup>

But far from encouraging a lawless rabble, pugilism was believed to cement law and order. Its hallmark was submission to authority, to the victor; it required command of the temper. The origins of pugilism were traced back to the ancient Greeks, but it had found its natural home in English soil. Above all, this was a British sport. In New South Wales the Governor, Sir Charles Fitzroy, enjoyed the hunt, and the turf but it was said that 'the manly sports of the field are his special favourites'.<sup>15</sup>

As backers the gentry were essential. In 1847 the championship fight between George Hough and Big Ike at Middle Harbour saw the extraordinary sum of £7,000 to £8,000 change hands. The money to hire the fleet of steamers and pleasure boats to convey the spectators was itself 'more than Mrs Chisolm's expenses'. They were leviathan betters, and the crowd at George's River in 1849 may well have surpassed the earlier record.<sup>16</sup>

Richard Waterhouse argues that the gentry's interest in pugilism declined in the 1850's as middle class respectability became more powerful. As Lieutenant Colonel Mundy noticed, gentlemen could also be arrested at a colonial prize fight.

The ring is dangerous, for the guardians of the public peace have set their faces against it, and the police hunt down principals and spectators, and seconds, with a zealous ardour which admits of no distinction.<sup>17</sup>

There was certainly a decline in the number of matches, but reports of aristocratic spectators remained throughout these years. Neither should the matches at Cockatoo Island be overlooked. Prize fights involving the prisoners on the island were held for the regiment as a lure to prevent guards deserting in the difficult days after gold was discovered. The security of the penal settlement was at risk, but prize fighting was one of a number of measures to keep the guards entertained and at their posts.<sup>18</sup>

As *Bell's Life* acknowledged, the colonial aristocracy was 'hand in glove with the profession' and this powerful, if unlikely alliance underpinned pugilism in the colony. Gentlemen backers gave the sport something vital: 'the protection of their presence and their purses'.<sup>19</sup>

The 1849 fight at George's River made Perry's name in the colony. He became

the ‘Ebony Phenomenon’ and was widely believed to be invincible. George Hough meanwhile was summoned to court at Parramatta for committing a breach of peace by prize fighting.<sup>20</sup>

Hough was arrested in Goulburn and goaled. Three months later he was still in gaol, pleading for his release. When he lost the fight, his backers, Tom and Bill Sparkes had refused to pay him. He had lost the sight of his eye, he had a wife and child, and in the opinion of the prison superintendent was ‘unlikely to fight again’. The fallen champion had been left to languish in gaol.<sup>21</sup>

The sport of pugilism was pursued by police, magistrates and Sydney’s respectable middle-class, but George’s River continued to host prize fights until at least 1853. It was however replaced by the goldfields where the sport was flourishing, and the PR were organising fights from hotels in Bathurst and Bendigo. For *Bell’s Life*, a city newspaper published in Sydney, the fights on the goldfields were not easily reported and the lack of coverage in its pages gave an impression of a sport in decline, an impression that did not convey its real status.

By the 1850’s the stars of pugilism who had fought at George’s River were ageing.

Sparkes was in his forties by the end of the decade; Sinclair was even older, in his late fifties. They continued to fight, but the George’s River area was no longer the same secret location as the dense forests were cleared and farms and market gardens established.<sup>22</sup>

The fights held at George’s River highlight the complexities involved in pursuing the sport of pugilism, for both fighters and spectators. Yet despite its illegality, the sport proved remarkably resilient, and continued to develop from an underground bare-knuckle league into a regulated sport that has contributed to Australia’s sporting culture.

### Footnotes:

<sup>10</sup> *Bell’s Life*, 10 & 31 August 1850.

<sup>11</sup> For examples of monitoring see *Bell’s Life*, 29 September, 13 October 1849, 29 March, 26 April 1851. New South Wales State Archives, NRS 3302, [4/5613] Parramatta Court of Petty Sessions, Bench Book, 8 October, 1 & 8 November 1849. *SMH*, 9 October 1849.

<sup>12</sup> *Bell’s Life*, 26 August, 1848, 29 June 1861. Hunt, Ron, *Parkestown to Earlwood*, Kingsford, Canterbury Historical Society, 1982.

<sup>13</sup> *SMH*, 10 April 1847. Nobby order: *Bell’s Life*, 8 July 1848, 13 May 1848; 1 Dec 1849, 8 December 1849.

<sup>14</sup> *Bell’s Life*, 29 April 1848.

<sup>15</sup> Frank L Dowling, *Fistiana: Or, the Oracle of the Ring*, London: W. Clement, 1841, pp77-80. W. Baker, *Heads of the People an Illustrated Journal of Literature, Whims, and Oddities*, ML FM4/10512, vol 1, 17 April 1847, p 65. Lieutenant Colonel J.E. Alexander, ‘Manly Exercises for Soldiers’, *Coulburn’s United Service Magazine*, ML DS355.05/1, 1858, pp 358-363.

<sup>16</sup> *Heads of the People*, 17 April 1847. £7,000 to £8,000 is equivalent in 2017 to AUD\$1,227,220 to \$1,402,540

<sup>17</sup> Lieutenant Colonel Mundy, ‘What We Know About Australia’ *Coulburn’s United Service Magazine*, ML DS355.05/1, 1852, pp 322-3. Richard Waterhouse, *Private Pleasures, Public Leisure, A History of Australian Popular Culture since 1788*, Longman, Melbourne, 1995, pp 37-9.

<sup>18</sup> Sue Castrique, *Under the Colony’s Eye: Gentlemen and Convicts at Cockatoo Island 1939-1869*, Anchor Books Australia, Spit Junction NSW, 2014, pp 82-87. For aristocratic spectators see, *Bell’s Life*, 8 July & 13 May 1848, 22 Mar 1851, 2 Feb 1852; 12 Feb 1853. *Bells Life in Victoria*, 20 & 27 March, 29May 1858.

<sup>19</sup> *Bell’s Life*, 12 February 1853.

<sup>20</sup> *Northern Star*, 18 June 1892. Peter Corris, *Lords of the Ring*, Sydney, 1980, p25. Hough: NSWSA: NRS 3302, [4/5613], Parramatta Court of Petty Sessions, Bench Book, 8 October 1849; 1 & 8 November 1849. *SMH*, 9 October 1849.

<sup>21</sup> NSWSA: NRS 905, [4/2892] Petition from George Huff, 50/2849, 23 March 1850.

<sup>22</sup> Brian J Madden & Lesly Muir, *Earlwood’s Past: A History of Earlwood, Undercliffe and Clemton Park*, Canterbury Municipal Council, 1989, p 17.

## McRae's Estate

A submission by Bryan Bateman

*Bryan is a member of the Society and entered the 2018 Local History Awards with this piece on McRae's Estate.*

McRae's Estate, so called because it was once owned by the McRae Family, is located south-east of Penshurst Railway Station and its boundaries were, what is now, Laycock Road, Hillcrest Avenue, Grove Avenue and Railway Parade. Originally the land was used for timber and farming and there was very little



growth in the area until 1880 when the railway line was built. Then there was a steady growth of population especially through the 1920's and the 1930's.

On 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1929 McRae's Estate was officially launched for sale having been sub-divided into quarter acre blocks for residential housing. One of the streets was named after the McRae Family (McRae's Avenue) and two of the street were named after two Japanese Generals, who featured predominately during the Great War (1914-1918) in which Japan was on our side. The two Generals were General Kuroki and General Tojo.

General Kuroki won many accolades for his successes in the Sino-Japanese War and even more praise and distinction for his command of Japanese Troops in the Russo-Japanese War, which commenced in 1904. General Kuroki died in 1923 so therefore took no part in World War II. The street that is named after him remains as Kuroki Street.

General Tojo was the son of a Lieutenant-General in the Imperial Japanese Army and his ancestors were all from the Samurai Caste and as such had always served the emperor. General Tojo went on to become Prime Minister of Japan and was Prime Minister during World War II. It was he who authorised the bombing of Pearl Harbour and Darwin. Because Prime Minister Tojo was against us in World War II, the street that was named after him – Tojo Street – was renamed Pacific Avenue and remains that way today.

Here endeth the history lesson. However, I should like to reiterate one salient point and that is, that Pacific Avenue is not the original name of that street: so with that in mind, I should like to put a proposal to the members of the Kogarah Historical Society Incorporated and it is this:

*“That the name of the street that is now known as Pacific Avenue, Penshurst, be changed to Rosewell Avenue to show our and the community's gratitude to Kenny Rosewell who used to live in Penshurst.”*

Also, Ken's parents owned and worked in their green-grocery shop in The Strand which is directly opposite the street in question.

I hope that we can all persuade the Council, which just changed its name itself and spent thousands of dollars on new stationery letterheads, to agree to this change, the cost of which would be minimal.

***Thought for the day! (24/8/2018)***

***Been there – done that.***

***Then, been there several more times, because apparently I never learn.***

# Trivia Quiz

By Rodger Robertson

## The Monopoly Board. Remember this?

The Board used in these questions is around 1960 - still uses £s and all the old London place names.

1. The four stations are?
2. The cheapest property was ? and the most expensive?
3. How many houses made a hotel?
4. The three yellow properties were Leicester Square , Coventry Street and ?
5. How many “Chance” squares are on the Board?
6. When you passed go you received £200 but how much was it to “get out of jail”?
7. What dice score took you from “Go” to “visiting jail”?
8. The railway stations featured which UK railway company? (Hope you have seen Michael Portillo’s series?)
9. What colour is Trafalgar Square?
10. What is the cost of landing on a hotel in Mayfair?

## Answers:

1. In order Kings Cross, Marylebone, Fenchurch Street, Liverpool Street.
2. Old Kent Road, Mayfair
3. 5
4. Piccadilly
5. 2
6. £50
7. 10
8. LNER ie London and North East Railways.
9. Red
10. £2000



Bring a chair, or we can find you one, and enjoy the wide variety of music. They deserve an audience.

## St George Concert Band

Spring is coming and we welcome back the St George Concert Band under the baton of Edgar Starr.

The band will play outside Carss Cottage from 2pm – 4pm (weather permitting) on three occasions before Christmas.

Sunday 14 October, Sunday 11 November and 2 December. Early Christmas celebrations on 2 December with Coffee/tea and cake served.

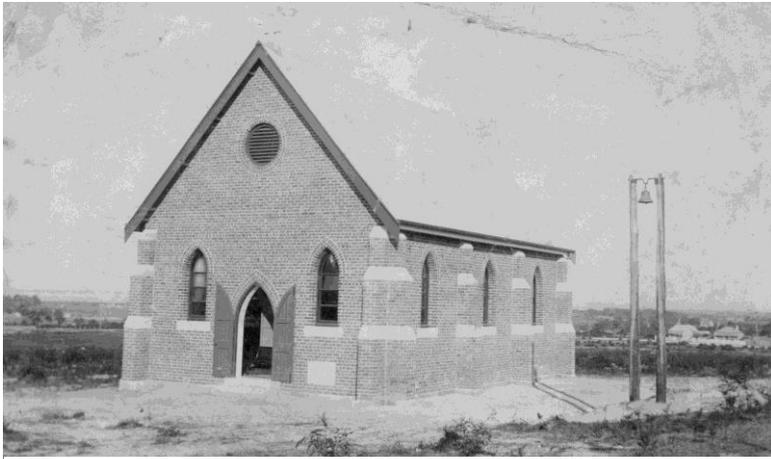
## St Cuthbert's Anglican church, 110<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

### *(Of Droughts and Flooding Rain)*

On August 15, 2018, St Cuthberts Church (now known as Park Road Anglican) on the corner of Park Road and Colvin Avenue, Carlton, celebrated its 110<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The occasion was marked by a luncheon for 60 Senior Citizens in the church hall. The menu served was reminiscent of the fare eaten by the pioneers of the church 110 years ago – soup, shepherd's pie, pumpkin scones and a birthday cake which consisted of a huge lamington slab made exactly to the 110 year old recipe. As well as this there was a display of grocery products which were available in 1908 and can still be bought today, e.g. Arnotts Sao Biscuits and Rosella Tomato Sauce.

The church of St Cuthbert was first planned on February 25, 1908 at a public meeting held on 'Jude's paddock', a 9 acre block of land at the corner of Kogarah Road and Bay Street (now Princes Highway and Park Road). The paddock was the property of the widow, Mary Jane Jude, who ran a little mixed business on the corner. The district in those days was sparsely populated and dotted with dairy farms and orchards. The idea of building a local church charged the residents with enthusiasm. They threw themselves into fund raising projects and by April 24 enough money had been raised to buy the land on which the church now stands. It was part of the Westbourne Park Estate comprising four building blocks fronting Park Road, on the corner of Henry Street (now Colvin Avenue).

Much of the building work was done by volunteer labour. Mrs Mary Jane Jude and Mr Irwin Smith each donated half the cost of the sandstone foundations for which the stone was cut from the Bibby Street quarry. Work on the exterior proceeded swiftly. The building was of brick with stone facings and an iron roof. Inside, gas lighting was installed. A communion



*The Church in July 1908*

table was made by Mr Cecil Haviland whose home, *Correa*, once stood on the site of the St. George Animal Hospital. Seating for 200 persons was cheaply provided by purchasing from the Randwick Tramway Workshops seats out of the old steam trams at a cost of 6 shillings (60 cents) each.

At last the little church was ready! The dedication and opening was set down for August 1, but owing to torrential rain the ceremony had to be postponed. The *Sydney Evening News* of August 5, 1908 referred to *the long-continued spell of wet weather* and reported –

*'every available penny will have to be spent in repairing the damages caused by the present cyclonic disturbance. All the flats stretching from President Avenue through the Moorefield Racecourse, and thence to Sans Souci, have never been so deeply covered in water, in fact, yesterday it was level with the top of the inside fence surrounding the racecourse. All lands have been so soddened with water that many trees – fell easily to the ground before Monday night's gale. A splendid lot of fancy wattle trees in front of a residence in Webbers Road*

*Kogarah, which were covered in bloom, were found this morning torn and riven as if by a lightning stroke – ‘*

And on August 11 the *Evening News* continued to alarm the population by reporting - *‘numerous washaways, the watertables filled with hundreds of tons of sand and silt, ... all roads in the low-lying portions covered in water’*

However, in spite of the postponement of the dedication, preparations and catering for a grand tea meeting and social to celebrate the church’s opening were already in hand and it was decided the function should go ahead. It took place on Thursday August 6 1908.

There were no motor cars, horse drawn transport was almost useless in the mud and people were forced to walk to the church. It was winter. It was dark. The weather was inclement. The unpaved roads were muddy. Yet in spite of all difficulty, 200 people turned up. The *St George Call* of August 8 reported

*‘Tea was on the tables at 6.30 when about 200 sat down to partake of the good things provided. The tables were tastefully decorated and well supplied ... after tea an impromptu program of speeches, songs, recitations and a conjuring act filled the evening.’*

The organizers had provided a meal for 200 people in a building which owned no tables, china or cutlery and had very little access to water.

In contrast to the grand tea meeting held in 1908, those who attended the celebratory luncheon in 2018 did so in dry weather brought on by the severest drought the state had felt for a century. The sun was shining. The sky was a cloudless blue. There was not an umbrella in sight. No one arrived carrying a lantern. In 2018 most of the guests came by car, driving over sealed roads. Concrete footpaths surrounded the church. The luncheon was held in the large hall built in 1923. The guests enjoyed the meal provided but afterwards they drew the line at the songs, recitations and conjuring act which had entertained their pioneer ancestors. The suburb and its residents had undergone a Century of Progress.

***Beverley Earnshaw 2018***

## **What’s On**

**A definite date for your diary:**

**Saturday 27 October – A Writer’s Day Festival event at Carss Cottage where the Kogarah Historical Society launch of the Local History Awards 2019 will take place.**

This is part of the Georges River Council Discovery Festival of Community Arts. The event will run from 12 midday to 4.00 pm and will include performances by a choir and musicians, two book launches, our launch of the Local History essay competition, plus readings by local writers, afternoon tea and we will have the Museum open for visitors. We will be looking for volunteers to show people around the Museum and of course we hope many of you will visit and enjoy the afternoon. All free, hopefully lovely weather and naturally beautiful surroundings.

**Tuesday 4 September 2018, 10 am – 1.00 pm – Historical Markers Bus Tour –** Georges River Council is conducting a tour of the five new historical markers, one in each ward of the Council area. There will be commentary on the historical aspects of the area during the tour. Participants will meet at Hurstville Museum and Gallery courtyard. The tour concludes with morning tea at the Sans Souci site. Free. Bookings through Council on 9330 6400 or email [TMacRae@georgesriver.nsw.gov.au](mailto:TMacRae@georgesriver.nsw.gov.au)

## Edward (Ted) Blake

The Museum recently had a visit from a descendant of the Blakes which aroused the interest of your editor especially after reading the ‘colourful’ obituary (following) which neglects to mention that Edward Blake was elected to Kogarah’s first Council in 1886 with the highest number of votes. According to accounts ‘young Edward Blake did not become the first mayor of Kogarah. Youth had to give way to age, and wealth, and the more mature land-speculator Edward Hogben, was elected.’ There were then 156 people on the electoral roll, 144 voted but franchise was not one of scrupulous equality, as those who owned the most land had the most votes.

Edward Blake served in other ways however and Blake contractors were responsible for draining the Kogarah Bay swamp which allowed people to reach the Botany Bay beaches. The method (and expense) was interesting – for the cost of one hundred and eighty-six pounds, a ‘fascine mattress’ was constructed composed of layers of crossed saplings with spaces filled by bundles of ti-tree. Ballast was spread and then a bridge built on the centre with an automatic flood gate to allow drainage of the swamp water as the tide rose in the Bay. The drained swamp is now the Beverley Park Golf Links.

Blake’s quarry supplied stone for roadways and in the 1880s for the new railway bridge at Como. Our earlier story mentions that sandstone was supplied for the building of St Cuthberts from the Bibby Street quarry. This was owned by Edward.

Edward was the second son of William Blake, after whom the suburb Blakehurst is called, who had thirteen children in all, six born to his first wife and seven to the second. The street where Edward lived is named Blake Avenue.

(Information from *History of Postal Code Area 2221* by Evelyn M Weir 1988 who took her references from *River, Road and Rail & Indexes* at Hurstville library)

### The Late Mr “Ted” Blake

*Extract from obituary in the St George Call (Kogarah 1904-1957) Friday 13 June 1924, P.6*

When ‘Ted’ Blake went west some days back, this district lost one of the most notable and picturesque natives we have had. Every inch a man, and also an ideal affectionate husband and father and a loyal and devoted friend. He spurned none, but befriended all. His nature was one of sunshine and he loathed gloom. Those who knew him in his younger and better days all said with one acclaim, viewed from every angle, he was one of the best.

He was a very versatile product. You may view him as a young sport of every grade – a road constructor in these parts in his early days, and with his popular father, one of our earliest local contractors and exploiters of the beautiful renowned timber on the Georges River and Port Hacking. How very few of the St George dweller now know anything of the local conditions when Ted Blake was a lad. He was one who helped to open out the whole of this then wild and wasteful country and make good the foundations of fine settlement between Cook’s River and Port Hacking. Those statements of fact are authentic.

Now, take his doings as an early sport, in which he was associated with some of our old and loved grown-ups now. Happily some survive. His first “pal” in any sphere of sport, was a man possessing very much the type of Ted’s adventurous spirit – Peter Moore. Look at things now and then – shewing the great sporting attributes of the old Kogarites – it may be said that the best display in the wallaby stunts of those days was a mob composed of men who unhappily do not live in these times but were a cavalcade of well mounted men, including Mr Peter Moore Snr; Mr Blake Snr; and a host of the other talent who were admired by all.

In early life he was a good horseman and in 1867 he rode “Chatterbox” on the Homebush racecourse and won. He was the owner of the crack racing pony “Cossack” in about 1875 and won races at all weights on the then known courses, Sans Souci, Kogarah, Canterbury Liverpool Cross Roads and Prospect.

With his father he exploited the great timber wealth of Heathcote and shipped timber and piles for ship building to Sydney Harbour for Pymont and other places and to outside ports. In 1872 they blazed the track and cleared the road from Sylvania to the Bulli Pass, punting mill logs wherever water was reached. The late Mr Blake built the wharf at Bundeena (Port Hacking), the Sans Souci wharf, the weir at Waterfall and many other important waterside structures.

He was one of the finest field shots and bush tacticians in his younger days and most of his shooting and camping companions in those times were Peter Moore, Pat English, Jack English (late Lord Mayor of Sydney) and many more. In later days his field and fishing companions were Messrs. W. Judd, Joe Carruthers, Jack South, Fred Gannon Snr, J.C. Gannon and Jim Archibald. The men named were worth knowing, happily some still remain.

As a pigeon shot he won all over the country at back marks, and was recognised as one of the best shots that ever handled a gun – he won many valuable trophies. In his apparent ruggedness there was a soft and kindly nature. He was loved by all and his bright and clean life will be long remembered by all those who have to follow on.

He sleeps now at Sutherland in the fragrance of the wattle and the gum which he loved so well, and his burial was attended by most of the surviving members of the old families from Cronulla to Liverpool and from Tempe to Otford.

He was singularly proud of his association with Mr Peter Moore, the late Mr “Billy” Simpson and Mr Peter Hermann JP.



## **Postage Stamps in Australia**

Isaac Nichols was Australia’s first Postmaster appointed in 1809 but at that time postage stamps were not in existence. Letters and parcels were collected from incoming ships and the people of Sydney would go to the office (a room in Isaac Nichols house) to receive their mail. A charge of one shilling for each letter was made, and for parcels not over 20lbs in weight the price was two shillings and sixpence and for heavier parcels five shillings.

In NSW, the colonial Postmaster General, James Raymond, had noted the progress of postal reform in England whereby postage charges would be prepaid and was impressed. In 1838 at a cost of one shilling and three pence per dozen, or one and one half pence each, letter sheets became available for purchase. These were not adhesive until 1853 when New South Wales became the first state to introduce them. The Colony was in fact, the first country to adopt such a system.

In the Kogarah area, a postal service was established in 1863. William Blake became the unofficial postmaster. The office was called Rocky Point Post Office but it was closed in 1868 when only 29 letters were posted in March. The running of the post office was taken over by John South, housed in the South family’s store and then in 1886, by John’s son, Thomas. However shortly after this a decision was made to make the post office official and it moved to Regent Street, Kogarah with a new postmaster on a salary of one hundred pounds per annum.

The Souths were compensated by being given a stamp vendor’s licence and the Blake family was also remembered for their service with the appointment of the second youngest son, Frederick Charles Blake, as postman for Kogarah and Rockdale.

***G. Whan***



1-9 September 2018

The History Council of NSW's flagship festival, History Week 2018: 'Life and Death', will explore life's defining moments and the impact of death on communities across time.

The theme of Life and Death includes stories about life's milestones and how different cultures come to terms with death. How do we commemorate people's lives and what do rituals and burial practices reveal about our relationship with and understanding of life and death?

Several organisations have events associated with this week. The History Council has a comprehensive program and the Royal Australian Historical Society is hosting two events *Archives: Living Beyond the Grave* and *Sandgate Cemetery 'Unearthed'*. Details from websites.

### **Acquisitions at the Museum**



Two gramophones were recently donated, adding to our collection of sound equipment.

This is the very first portable Decca Dulcephone "Trench" model produced in 1914 – patented by Barnett Samuel and Sons. Soldiers took them to WW1.

It came with records, needles and even a spare arm. It plays quite well – the sound box is the round 'silver' recessed lid.

One of the Wheatley family had worked for Grafanola in Sydney in the 1920s and both gramophones were imported from England as prototypes and the company gave one of each to the grandfather of our donor.

### **Change of Venue**

Just a reminder that the September meeting will be held, once again, at the Community Hub, 49 English Street, Kogarah. This is the home of Kogarah Community Services and we very much appreciate the use of their excellent room and facilities.

Edith Ziegler's topic will provide a social history of the mid 20<sup>th</sup> Century illustrated by letters between mother and son, Leslie Walford, a leading interior designer and social columnist and Dora Byrne, his socially prominent mother who was also a tireless worker for charitable causes.